(b) A vigil is kept on the movement of this race by Directorate of Wheat Research, Karnal, through International collaboration. CIMMYT, Mexico is also providing regular information on the movement of this race. Indian Council of Agricultural Research, in collaboration with CIMMYT, Mexico has tested the Indian wheat cultivars in Africa, against the new pathotype (Ug 99) of the said disease. A number of wheat entries have been identified possessing resistance against the new race of the stem rust fungus. This source of resistance will be useful for developing resistant wheat varieties which will prevent incidence of the new race of African fungus.

There is a well established Plant Quarantine regulatory system in the country under the Destructive Insects and Pests Act, 1914, under which, necessary steps are taken to prevent the introduction and spread of exotic pests and disease that are destructive to crops by regulating/restricting the import of plant materials and plant products. There are well defined regulations under Plant Quarantine Order, 2003, for the import of any plant material or plant product, either for propagation or consumption purposes. Post entry quarantine inspection is also undertaken to ensure that the imported plant material is free from any pests and disease. The plant quarantine regulations are implemented in the country through 39 Plant Quarantine Stations spread over sea ports, airports and land custom stations. Further, a regular surveillance for pest and disease emergence in the country, is also conducted to take emergency measures, wherever required, through Central Integrated Pest Management Centres, Indian Council of a Agricultural Research and State Agricultural Departments.

(c) Question does not arise.

Construction of new Rail Lines

*171. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total mileage of new railway lines constructed during the last three years;

(b) whether his avowed objective to give stiff and healthy competition to the transportation of goods by road through trucks, trailers, etc. is being adequately fulfilled, through innovative schemes and construction of new lines; and

(c) if so, whether such a consideration if also being shown to expedite the construction of envisaged new Wardha-Yavatmal-Nanded lines?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) A total of 492 kms. of new lines have been constructed during the last three years.

(b) It is a fact that the competition to the transportation of goods by road is being given through a number of freight incentive schemes. The new lines projects are taken up as per the policy enunciated by the National Transport Policy Committee in 1980 to serve new industries, missing links, strategic reasons, for establishment of new growth centres and for giving access to remote areas. A large number of projects have been taken up on socio-economic considerations.

(c) The survey for Wardha-Yavatmal-Nanded section has been completed as per which, cost of construction of 270 kms. long time has been assessed as Rs. 581 crore with a negative rate of return. State Govt. has been requested to consider sharing of 50% cost of the project. In a meeting with Chief Minister, Maharashtra, Minister for Railways agreed that the proposal would be processed further provided State Government gives its consent to share atleast 40% of the cost as a special case in view of a difficult conditions amongst farming community in Vidarbha Region. State Government has since shown willingness to share cost of work such as earthen embankment, side drains, metal breaking and spreading etc., upto 35-45%, which could be undertaken under National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and State Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS). State Govt. is again being requested to agree to share atleast 40% of the cost of project without linking in with NREP & EGS.

Outstanding amount against fertilizer companies

†*172. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount in crores outstanding against the fertilizer companies in the country and the steps taken by Government so far to realize the outstanding amount;

(b) whether the production of fertilizer has been affected due to the companies against which amount is outstanding; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.